

UP TO JULY 5, 1968

**3,024 U.S. aircraft were
downed in North Viet Nam**

VIETNAM

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U.S. WITHDRAWAL FROM KHE SANH

A PUBLIC ADMISSION OF U.S. STRATEGY'S FIASCO

In a communiqué issued in Saigon on June 27, the U.S. Command announced that its troops had begun evacuating Khe Sanh. *Giai Phong Press Agency* confirmed the fact and gave the first balance-sheet of enemy losses in this sector, which we published in our last issue.

Thus, the first important move taken by General Abrams as Cin-C of U.S. forces in South Viet Nam to abandon this forward post, a "western anchor to a line of forts" installed by his predecessor since mid-1966 and strung out parallel to the temporary military demarcation line, along Highway No 9. The reason given by the U.S. Command for this withdrawal was, according to *Reuter*, rather simple: Khe Sanh is now unnecessary to U.S. strategy! Believe it or not, as you like, but one could hardly forget that pathetic meeting held not long ago at which L.B. Johnson asked his chiefs of staff to give a written pledge to hold on at all costs to this valley located in the extreme north-western tip of South Viet Nam.

THE LONGEST SIEGE, THE FIERCEST CONFRONTATION OF THE WAR

The siege of Khe Sanh by the P.L.A.F. practically began on January 28, shortly before the Tet simultaneous uprisings and general offensive. Since then, the enemy forces had got no

breathing space in this sector. Operation *Pegasus* in April involving 15,000 men, mostly G.I.'s of the First Cavalry, was but a futile effort and costly at that in terms of human lives and material damage. A force of some 6,000 Marines remained under siege and constant threat of destruction in spite of a gigantic effort made by the U.S. artillery and air force.

Assailed with a deluge of steel and fire which far surpassed in intensity all was known of by mankind thus far*, the P.L.A.F. have been displaying such combativity, cleverness, tenacity and endurance as command the admiration of even the enemy. They have succeeded in maintaining a continued pressure on the enemy positions. They have been making good use of very varied forms of combat: wiping out enemy man-power and material reserves with mortar and artillery fire, assaulting or besieging positions, cutting land, air and river supply routes, intercepting enemy reinforcements, etc.. In short, the battle of Khe Sanh has been not only the longest siege but also a direct confrontation between the two fighting forces, as far as the morale and value of the troops and the operational direction and fighting technique are concerned.

From this 22 week-long duel, P.L.A.F. have come out victorious by putting out of action 15,000 enemy troops

(or 100 men per day, including 11,700 G.I.'s and shooting down or destroying or damaging 450 aircraft, 1000 vehicles and 2000 pieces of equipment).

MOVING INTO KHE SANH
AN INDICATION OF THE
STRATEGIC LOSS OF
INITIATIVE

WESTMORELAND set up this base in Autumn 1966 after he had been forced to put off sine die the occupation of the Mekong Delta by U.S. troops, planned for the "second dry-season offensive." Thus the move was taken in a situation of strategic passivity, something which badly affected the subsequent development of the operations in this sector, as well as in the whole area north of Quang Tri province with the bases of Cuu Viet, Dong Ha, Doc Mien, Con Tien, Hill 241 or Camp Carroll (heavy artillery base).

The U.S. Command always considered the Khe Sanh combat base the keystone

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* According to the western press, during the first 80 days of the siege, the Americans dropped 115,000 tons of ordinary bombs (the same amount was used against Japan during World War II) and fired 101,741 shells in direct support of their troops at Khe Sanh.

South Viet Nam

- One Week After Khe Sanh Evacuation Order, the Yankees Still Fail To Pull Out Completely and Suffer 700 Casualties.
- A Puppet Battalion Wiped Out, Two Others Decimated North-East of Saigon.
- Biggest Bridge in Mekong Delta Blown Up.
- Div. Americal H.Q. Stormed.

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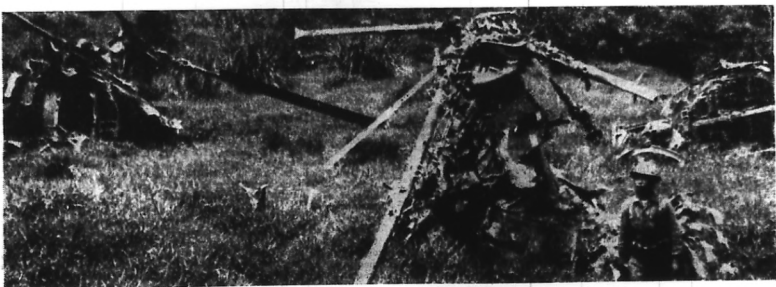
DEEDS, Mr JOHNSON

MR Harriman was not present at the tenth session of the Paris talks. But it is not this absence that causes me not to address him today: there is a time for everything, a time for questions, and then a time when answers must come. I know that the real answer should come not from Mr Harriman, but from higher up.

I may be told that the President of the United States has clearly stated his intentions a long time ago and that his will for peace has manifested itself in many a speech. Who doesn't remember the famous Baltimore speech? It was the 7th of April, 1965, two months after the start of savage bombings on the

D.R.V.N. Did anyone ever hear the president of a super-power speak with such modesty, nay such humility? He simply asked for negotiations, without any pre-conditions. He added that he was even ready to devote a billion dollars to help the unhappy peoples of Southeast Asia free themselves from misery. The speech ended with a veritable prayer: "Every night before I turn out the light to sleep, I ask myself this question: Have I done everything I can to help to bring peace and hope to all the peoples of the world?" More than three years have passed. Whose fault is it if peace hasn't returned?

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U.S. aircraft downed by P.L.A.F. at Khe Sanh

3,000 U.S. AIRCRAFT DOWNED IN NORTH VIET NAM



Conventional A.A. Defence (a Haiphong unit)



People's Militia
(a unit of militia women
in Ha Tinh province)

47 MODELS OF U.S. AIRCRAFT DOWNED

- 1 model of strategic bomber: B-52 Stratofortress.
- 1 model of tactical bomber: B-57 Canberra.
- 17 models of fighter-bombers and 8 of fighters well-known for their high performance: F-4 Phantom, F-105 Thunderchief, A-1 Intruder, A-4 Skyhawk, F-8 Crusader, and the famous "variable geometry" F-111-A.
- 13 models of reconnaissance planes including RB-66 Destroyer, equipped with expensive electronic instruments, and 2 robot spy planes.
- 4 models of survey and patrol planes of U.S. Navy including the electronic four-engine EC-119 Warning Star.
- 2 models of transports.
- 3 models of helicopters including the OH-6A pilotless jet spy helicopter.

Surface-to-air missiles

Those Who Helped Toward the 3,000-Mark

People's Navy
(artillery of an elite unit)



People's Air Force
(Major Tran Hanh, hero of
the armed forces, returning
from a victorious flight)



A WAR THAT SWALLOWS UP DOLLARS

U.S. aggression against Viet Nam is known as the most expensive war ever fought by the U.S. The air war brutally waged against the D.R.V.N. since August 5, 1964 accounts for an important part of the

bill footed by the Pentagon. Hereunder are some figures supplied by the U.S. organs concerned and the American press.

Up to June 25, 1968, after 1421 days of attacks against North Viet Nam, the U.S. air force lost 3,000 planes, most of them up-to-date jets, or an average loss of 2 aircraft per day for four years running. Topping by far the list of these 3,000 planes downed are F-105 Thunderchiefs and Phantoms which respectively cost 1.5 million and 2 million dollars each. The night-bomber, A-6 Intruder, grounded by the do-

zen in the D.R.V.N. (mostly by infantry fire) costs 3 million apiece and an RB-66 Destroyer electronic reconnaissance plane, 6 million. The most expensive are the Stratofortresses B-52, a big 8-turbo-prop strategic bomber of the U.S.A.F. which costs 9.5 million dollars (6 of which have been downed in the D.R.V.N.), and the F-111-A variable geometry swing-wing fighter-bomber, the most up-to-date American plane which costs 7 million dollars (1 of which have been shot down by North Viet Nam).

THE U.S. has lost in North Viet Nam thousands of airmen captured, killed, or wounded to unfitness for

flying missions. As the western press says, a pilot "is worth his weight in gold" and to be rated as a jet pilot he must fly at least 600 hours (one hour consumes 1,000 litres of fuel). The training of a pilot capable of flying all-weather missions requires eight years and costs 773,000 dollars on the average.

THE price of each ton of bomb is 2,000 dollars, that of a 15-rockets container 1,000 dollars, and a flare 75 dollars.

Because of the shortage of bombs, the U.S. imperialists had to repurchase from West Germany at 21 dollars each of the lot they had sold at 1.72 dollars each, or 12 times dearer.

As by December 1967 U.S. planes had used in Viet Nam 100,000 tons of bombs, this represents a handsome sum of 1.3 billion dollars.

ROGER HILSMAN, former Assistant Secretary of State in charge of Far-Eastern Affairs, revealed on March 26, 1968 that the bombing of North Viet Nam had swallowed up 6 billion dollars, including 4.5 billion worth of planes lost. That is, of course, a very conservative estimate.

So many billion dollars supplied by American taxpayers have gone down the drain, such has been the achievement of Johnson and Company.

3,000 U.S. AIRCRAFT DOWNED IN NORTH VIET NAM

SCORE-BOARD OF NORTH VIET NAM ANTI-AIRCRAFT DEFENCE VERSUS U.S. AIR FORCE

U.S. Annual loss of aircraft since the first air raids on the D.R.V.N.:
12 in 1964 (since August 5)
834 in 1965
773 in 1966
1067 in 1967
332 in 1968 (first six months)
Total: 3018 (up to June 30, 1968)
U.S. heaviest monthly losses:
April 1965: 163 planes downed.
May 1967: 160
October 1967: 131
November 1967: 131
July 1966: 123
August 1967: 116
September 1967: 111
August 1966: 109
October 1965: 105
U.S. heaviest and memorable daily losses:
August 5, 1964: surprise attacks on 4 localities in the D.R.V.N., beginning of escalation: 8 planes downed.
February 7, 1965: beginning of regular raids: 4 planes downed over Dong Hoi (latitude 17°20' N).
April 3 and 4, 1965: 57 planes downed including 37 over two big bridges near the 20th parallel reached by U.S. escalation toward the end of May.
June 29, 1966: First raids on urban areas of Hanoi and Haiphong: 7 planes downed.
December 13 and 14, 1966: 12 planes downed by Hanoi A.A. Defence.
December 20, 1967: 2 B-52 strategic bombers downed over Vinh Linh (17th parallel).
March 28, 1968: The first F-111-A swing-wing plane

downed in Ha Tinh province three days after the commissioning of the first squadron of this type of planes. Two days later, a second one was downed west of Hanoi.

Achievements of various arms:
Conventional A.A. Defence has had its lion's share in the downing of the 3,000 planes. Its most remarkable moments and battles were:
153 planes downed in April 1965.
86 planes downed in September 1965.
84 planes downed in July 1966.
82 planes downed in August 1966.
87 planes downed in May 1967.
12 planes downed over Haiphong on April 25, 1967.
10 planes downed over Hanoi on May 19, 1967.
8 planes downed within 2 minutes on October 17, 1967 over Bac Giang.

4 planes downed over Con Co Island (17th parallel) on May 31, 1968.
Surface-to-air missile units have made great progress. The number of American planes grounded by this means on May 12, 1967 was 12. On May 13, 1967 the number of planes grounded by this means on each of six other days.

The People's Navy has co-ordinated its action with ground A.A. batteries and has outstandingly contributed to victory, chiefly in the defence of the famous Ham Hong bridge over which 47 American planes were downed on April 30 and May 5, 1967.

38 planes downed in October 1967.
21 planes downed in July 1966.

27 planes downed in November 1967.
8 planes downed on November 19, 1967.
7 planes downed on each of the days: October 5, 1965, July 19, 1966 and October 21, 1967.

The People's Air Force has to its credit several hundred enemy planes downed, in unequal dog fights. In 1967, it grounded a number of planes double that of 1966 and 8 times that of 1965.

Its most glorious months and days were:
May 1967: 23 U.S. planes downed.
April 1967: 18 U.S. planes downed.
September 1967: 12 U.S. planes downed.
November 1967: 11 U.S. planes downed.
December 1967: 11 U.S. planes downed.

Our air force won its first victory on April 3, 1965 by downing 2 F-4s near the 20th parallel. It bagged 30 planes on each of the days: April 30 and May 5, 1967. 4 planes (including that of U.S.A.F. Colonel Norman Gaddis) on May 12, 1967 and 4 planes on each of six other days.

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over fifty of these up-to-date planes. The part played by various provinces and regions in the downing of American planes is shown in the map above (up to June 25, 1968). The record is held by Quang Binh province with 472 planes downed, followed by Nghe An province (392), Thanh Hoa province (272), Hanoi (288) and Haiphong (210). Four provinces have downed between 118 and 190 planes and 9 others between 80 and 100.

SOME U.S. PILOTS Captured Before and After March 31, 1968

- 1—John Peter Flynn, born 1922, Ohio, U.S.A.F. Colonel, service number 15760A, captured October 27, 1967 in Hanoi.
- 2—John Sidney Mac Cain, born 1936, Panama, U.S. Navy Lieutenant-Commander, Palama, service number 024787, captured October 26, 1967 in Hanoi.
- 3—Edwin Frank Miller, born 1940, New York State, Lieutenant Junior, U.S. Navy, service number 70650, pilot of a carrier Enterprise-based RF-4B, shot down by Nghe An anti-aircraft force May 22, 1968.
- 4—Roger Dean Ingvalson, born 1928, Minnesota, Major of U.S.A.F., FR 30713, pilot of a KC-135A (Thailand)-based F-105D, shot down by anti-aircraft artillery over Quang Binh May 28, 1968.
- 5—Richard George Tangeman, born 1940, New York State, Lieutenant, U.S. Navy, service number 066570, pilot of a carrier Enterprise-based RF-4B, shot down by Ha Tinh anti-aircraft force May 5, 1968.
- 6—Wesley Lewis Rumble, born 1943, California, First Lieutenant, U.S.A.F., service number F.V. 313585, pilot of a Da Nang-based F-4D, shot down by Quang Binh anti-aircraft force April 28, 1968.
- 7—Praphan Sirion, born 1934, Udorn, warrant-officer, U.S.A.F., pilot of a Don Muang (Thailand)-based C-47, shot down by Nghe An anti-aircraft force March 26, 1966.



ON THE LARGE SOUTHERN FRONT

Military Operations

KHE SANH AND NORTH-ERN PART OF QUANG TRI PROVINCE

THE P.L.A.F. have been hammering at U.S. Marines now evacuating Khe Sanh combat base. They have been combining their artillery and infantry in attacks against enemy positions and ambushes against his convoy on the road of retreat.

U.S. fortified positions on Hills 689, 552, 845, 882, 471 etc., around Ta Con (Khe Sanh) base were mortared and shelled every day. Many choppers, storehouses, ammunition depots, fuel tanks and barracks were destroyed or burnt. P.L.A.F. storming parties engaged U.S. Marines in fierce hand-to-hand fights on Hills 689 and 845 (June 25) in "Rom" plantation which fell under their control on July 1, 1968.

The same day, a convoy of 50 vehicles was intercepted with heavy adverse losses on the section of Highway No 9 between Rao Quan and Ca Lu and a cannon parking ground at Lang Khoai was overrun: the enemy lost many men and a 105 mm cannon. Meanwhile, Hill 689 was assaulted by the P.L.A.F. who killed or wounded 130 G.I.s and downed 3 choppers. The battle was still raging on July 2.

The initial list of American losses at Khe Sanh in the week ending July 2 mentioned 700 U.S. Marines killed or wounded, 13 aircraft downed or destroyed on the ground, 3 cannons and mortars put out of action and many depots and barracks set afire. Up to now, the U.S. Command is still unable to withdraw its troops from the Khe Sanh hell.

In the sector east of Highway No.9, the P.L.A.F. gave battle to the enemy

at Cua Viet and north of Dong Ha on June 26, 27 and 28 and inflicted on him 160 casualties, burnt 2 cargo-boats and 2 depots (at Cua Viet) and damaged U.S. patrol boat No 2008 near the 17th parallel.

Giai Phong Press Agency has given details of the bombardment of Dong Ha on June 20: 400 G.I.s killed or wounded, 12 depots, about one hundred vehicles, 3 cranes, 6 aircraft including a C-130 transport, 8 ordnance pieces destroyed or damaged. The U.S. Marine Division 3 H.Q. was hit.

On June 17 and 18, a small artillery unit of the P.L.A.F. put out of action 150 G.I.s by repeatedly shelling the enemy at Con Tien and Bai Son.

SAIGON AND PERIPHERY

ON June 29, the P.L.A.F. fired rockets on police stations, G.I. garrisons in Saigon (6th district) or in the northwest suburbs. It was the 32nd shelling of Saigon since May 5.

The same day, at Ba Diem, 10 km north of the city, the P.L.A.F. closed in upon an American unit and inflicted on it 200 casualties.

They won a brilliant victory in Binh Quan region, 80 km northeast of Saigon, on Road No 20 from Saigon to Da Lat. On the night of June 20, they wiped out a puppet company defending a bridge on the La Nga river and destroyed it. On June 22, they ambushed a puppet battalion air dropped at 10 km to the northeast and on their way from Dinh Quan to La Nga, and put it out of action within 30 minutes. Meanwhile many other puppet units of rein-

forcement were violently attacked and had 2 battalions decimated; the enemy gun emplacements in the locality were silenced by P.L.A.F. shelling.

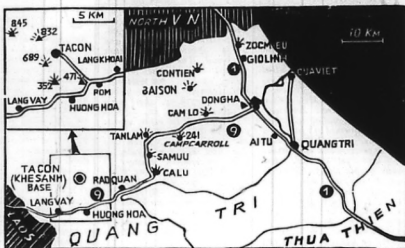
On June 23, a convoy of 10 U.S. river craft supported by aircraft was intercepted by the P.L.A.F. at 30 km southeast of Saigon on June 23: 6 vessels set afire.

Ben Luc bridge, the biggest in the Mekong Delta, 25 km southwest of Saigon, was blown up by the guerrillas who thus cut off Highway No 4 linking Saigon to the rich rice-producing provinces in South Viet Nam.

SOUTHEAST of Da Nang, the H.Q. of Division 3, American at Tam Ky town was bombed at

0 hour on June 23 and a big fire broke out with flames going up 200 metres high. A bridge near the town was also shelled: 2 vessels were damaged.

At Da Nang, the building housing an enemy military organ was mined on June 29: 29 enemy troops killed including a colonel and two lieutenant colonels.



A PUBLIC ADMISSION OF U.S. STRATEGY'S FIASCO

(Continued from page 1)

its defence network, a position worth defending at all costs, as *USIS* remarked on Feb. 15, 1968. Yet, the embarrassment of the enemy at Khe Sanh only worsened. While the 6,000 U.S. Marines were pinned down in the valley, fighting raged in Hue, Da Nang and the coastal fringe of the province of the First Tactical Zone. Moreover, as the *BBC* commented on June 28, 1968, 40,000 other G.I.s were tied down in areas close to Khe Sanh, because they had to stand ready at all times to come to the rescue of the entrenched camp. The inevitable outcome of such a state of passivity has been increased losses sustained by the U.S. troops in this sector. In its June 16, 1968 issue, the *Los Angeles Times* revealed that two-thirds of the U.S. casualties in South Viet Nam in this period were suffered by those units stationed in the First Tactical Zone, that is, the Marines, the air cavalrymen and the paratroops of the 101st Division.

The attacks and popular uprisings in the urban centres finally tipped the balance of forces in a decisive fashion at the expense of the aggressors and their puppets. While the P.L.A.F. grow rapidly in

force and were in a position to beat battle anywhere and anytime, the enemy forces found themselves spread thinner than ever before over the whole territory. The shortage of man-power become painful for the U.S. Command, especially the mobile forces and strategic reserves, and threatened them with collapse. This was what prompted its decision to evacuate Khe Sanh.

...BUT GETTING OUT IS A FAR WORSE SETBACK

IN ordering the withdrawal from Khe Sanh, the enemy publicly admitted the fiasco of his strategy. The psychological and political effects of such a move will be very unfavourable to him. The more so as for the White House and the U.S. Command in Saigon, this stronghold had become, as *Reuter* put it (June 27, 1968), "the symbol of U.S. determination" to pursue the war.

Militarily, the evacuation of Khe Sanh broke the "anchor" which held, to the West, the U.S. defence set up in northern Quang Tri. Just as a small breach in a dam causes the loss of a whole section of dyke during a high tide, this withdrawal is to con-

siderably weaken the enemy defence line in this area and in the northern sector of South Viet Nam. According to an American paper, U.S. officers early this year were of the opinion that if the Marines withdrew from Khe Sanh, they would be able to stop only until they had reached... the China Sea.

In evacuating Khe Sanh, the U.S. Command did everything it could to try to give a slip, surreptitiously, to those who were beleaguering it. But in this, it did not succeed. Capitalizing on the disarray which set the enemy troops, the P.L.A.F. increased their pressure. The inevitable disorder and the risks arising from this precipitated removal threaten to turn the U.S. retreat into a debacle. As a matter of fact, in a week since the evacuation began, at Khe Sanh 700 G.I.s and puppet soldiers were killed or wounded, and large quantities of war material destroyed. An important part of the enemy forces are still unable to pull out in spite of a whole armada of choppers at the disposal of the Americans in South Viet Nam. Everything seems to indicate that for the latter, to leave the valley which has cost them much blood in this war is as difficult as to hold it.



Is this G.I. thinking of his "mission of defending freedom" in South Viet Nam?